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EDITORIAL

On December 20, 1606, three little ships, the *Susan Constant*, the *Goodspeed*, and the *Discovery*, sailed from London to cross the Atlantic, and establish an English colony in the New World. For passengers they had one hundred and twenty men, strictly a stag party; also as large a quantity of supplies and utensils as they could carry. This was the beginning of the Jamestown Colony.

The citizens of Washington, D. C., were emphatically reminded of this event on Friday, March 22, by the appearance of three most picturesque little vessels, bearing the same names, and painted in the same bright colors. They were the exact replicas of the three original ships. They had been recently built in Norfolk to do their part in celebrating the three hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Virginia.

Come to think of it, our English friends have most graciously done us the compliment of building and launching a replica, as exact as it is possible to make it, of our own *Mayflower*. She is to cross the ocean under her own canvas, and we shall soon have opportunity to see her with our own eyes. At this writing she is doing a little experimental sailing off the Channel port of Brixham in preparation for her regular start from Plymouth, England. She hopes to reach Plymouth, Massachusetts, by the middle or end of May.

There could be no more vivid or eloquent way of celebrating such events than by building these replicas of the original vessels, and putting them through the actual experience of the original voyages, with all their dangers and hardships. It is as though both vessels, *Susan Constant* and *Mayflower*, simply traced a great loop around the intervening centuries and brought the two ends together: 1607 side by side with 1957, and 1620 side by side with 1957, where comparisons become most dramatically possible, and sundry leading questions are inevitable.

When the *Susan Constant* drops anchor off Jamestown in 1957 will she find that the desperate hopes and fantastic expectations which the original *Susan Constant* brought over in 1607 have been adequately fulfilled, or suitably justified? When the *Mayflower II* cuts the lashings on her starboard bower, and sets it free, with a splash and a rumble, to take a good safe bite of New England mud, some time next month, will she find that the sacred ideals and heartfelt prayers which *Mayflower I* brought over and anchored to the same holding ground three and one third centuries ago, have been honored and answered to their satisfaction? Only the intervening years can reply, and there they are in the loop, safe in the bag as we say, waiting to be examined, humbly pondered, and prayerfully studied, that their lessons may not be lost to us, nor their warnings be overlooked.

Of course, our first inevitable reaction to such a comparison will be one of profound astonishment, that these modest beginnings at Jamestown and Plymouth have developed, through no conscious will or effort on the part of the human factors involved, into such an astonishing result. Little did our ancestors know what they were doing, what stupendous lines of causation they were setting into operation both in Jamestown and Plymouth. Had they known, would they have persisted? It is an unavoidable question. Had they possessed the clairvoyance to realize that their labors and sufferings were destined to produce a new nation, America the Beautiful, reaching from sea to shining sea, with its amber waves of grain, and its fruited plain, and its purple mountain majesties, and its liberating strife, and its alabaster cities, and its principles of universal enlightenment, equality, justice, freedom of opportunity for the humblest and the proudest in equal measure? Had they possessed the power to foresee all this, would they not have turned

(Continued on last page)

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Channing's Principles of Religious Education

Compiled from his address to the Sunday School Society

by Paul Harmon Chapman

Unitarians who value their Unitarian Christian heritage are often called "Channing Unitarians." What a challenge! If one could be worthy of it, could have Channing's breadth of view, his depth of insight, his spiritual sensitivity and his courage! He was not afraid of being a different kind of Christian than those who misappropriated the term. He was not one to abandon the use of the word to those who mis-used it.

In his address to the Sunday School Society he asks: "What is to be taught in the Sunday School?" He replies, "the answer would be the Christian Religion." But, he asks: "In what forms shall the religion be taught, so as to wake up the life of the child? Shall a catechism be taught? I say, no! A catechism is a skeleton, a dead letter, a petrification. Wanting life, it can give none." He sees rather, that, "The Christian religion should be learned not from catechisms and systems, but from the scriptures in which it especially resides, in the histories, actions, words, sufferings, triumphs of Jesus Christ. The Gospels—these should be the textbook of the Sunday Schools. . . . The great object of study must be, to penetrate to the spirit of these divine writings and, above all things, to comprehend the spirit, character, purpose, motives, love of Jesus Christ. He is to be the great object of study."

A very devoted Unitarian young woman, who was a faithful pupil in Unitarian Church Schools for years, recently said: "Jesus has always seemed like some strange person who was somehow human but could do things we cannot do and whom, therefore, I could never understand." In speaking of giving the pupils as full an understanding as possible of the historical background and some concept of what Jesus taught and was, Dr. Channing warned: "But all this knowledge is not to be gained for its own sake, but as a means of bringing us nearer to Jesus." How many Unitarians feel near to Jesus? And yet Unitarians should feel closer to him than those who make of him a God. Is it because we have for so long gotten away from Dr. Channing's insight and understanding? Do we understand Jesus so well that we no longer need the Bible? Or have we missed something in forgetting that he said: "The great work, then, of the Sunday School is to teach Christ, and to teach him not as set forth in creeds and human systems, but as living and moving in the simple histories of the Evangelists. Christ is to be taught; and by this I mean, not any mystical doctrine of the Trinity, but the spirit of Christ, breathing forth in all that he said and all that he did. . . . The doctrine of the Trinity seems to me only fitted to throw a mistiness over Christ, to place him beyond the reach of our understanding and hearts. . . . God, I know. Man I can understand. But Christ, as described in human creeds, a compound being, at once man and God . . . who is so united with two other persons as to make with them one mind, Christ so represented baffles all my faculties. . . . This is the great objection to the doctrine of the Trinity. It destroys the reality, the distinctness, the touching nearness of Jesus Christ. It has thrown a glare over him, under which the bright and beautiful features of his character have been much concealed."

Dr. Channing rejects all these vague theories ABOUT JESUS and reveals a concept of the simplicity and directness of ESSENTIAL CHRISTIANITY. He says to the Sunday School teachers: "Christianity is set forth in the life, the history, the character of Jesus, and his character, though so sublime, is still so real, so genuine, so remarkable for simplicity, and so naturally unfolded amid the common scenes of life, that it is seized in its principal features by the child as no other greatness can be. One of the excellences of Christianity is, that it is not an abstruse theory, not wrapped in abstract phrases; but taught us in facts, in narratives. It lives, moves, speaks, and acts before our eyes."

Though he puts great emphasis on the value of the Gospels as a source book for the Sunday School teaching Dr. Channing urges that the principles and teachings be applied to every-day life. He warns against mechanical teaching, by which the young mind becomes worn, deadened to the greatest truths. He advocates using other source materials and has much to say about the methods of teaching. He declares: "A principal end in the meeting of teachers should be to learn the art of teaching, the way to approach the youthful mind." His rules for teaching are as applicable today as when he first phrased them. Here are some of them in brief:

"The first aim of the teacher will, of course, be to fix the attention of the pupil. It is vain that you have his body in the class room, if his mind is wandering beyond it."

"As the first means of establishing an influence over the young, I would say, you must love them. Nothing attracts like love."

"To awaken in the young an interest in what you teach, you must take an interest in it yourself. You must not only understand but feel the truth."

"Another rule in teaching is, let your teaching be intelligible. Children love light not darkness."

"Another suggestion is, teach much by questions. These stimulate, stir up the young mind and make it its own teacher. No lesson is so well learned, as that which a man or a child teaches himself."

"Again, teach graphically where you can. Cultivate the power of description."

"Another rule is, lay chief stress on what is most important in religion. Seize on the great points, the great ideas."

"Another rule is, carry a cheerful spirit into religious teaching. Let your tones and words bear witness to its benignant, cheerful influence."

He adds one more rule: "Speak of duty, of religion, as something real, just as you speak of the interests of this life. Nothing attracts old and young more than a tone of reality, the natural tone of strong conviction."

What is the great end of religious education? Would we not all agree with Dr. Channing's feeling, that, "The great end is, to awaken the soul of the pupil, to bring his understanding conscience and heart into earnest, vigorous action on religious and moral truth, to excite and cherish in him Spiritual Life." Dr. Channing was far in advance of his time in advocating creative teaching, for he proclaimed that the pupil "is a free agent, and our end should be to develop such a being. He must not be treated as if he were unthinking matter. You make a house, a ship, a statue, without its own consent . . . the child has a will as well as yourself. The great design of his being is, that he shall act for himself on himself. The great end of religious instruction, whether in the Sunday School or family is, not to stamp our minds irresistibly on the young, but to stir up their own, not to make them see with our eyes, but to look inquiringly and steadily with their own; not to burden the memory, but to quicken and strengthen the power of thought; not to bind them by ineradicable prejudices to our own particular sect or peculiar notions, but to prepare them for impartial, conscientious judging . . . not to impose religion on them in the form of arbitrary rules, which rest on no foundation but our own word and will, but to awaken the conscience, the moral discernment, so that they may discern and approve for themselves what is everlastingly right and good; not to tell them that God is good, but to help them to see and feel his love in all that he does within and around them; not to tell them of the dignity of Christ, but to open their inward eye to the beauty and greatness of his character, and to kindle aspirations after a kindred virtue. In a word, the great object of all schools is, to awaken intellectual and moral life in the child."

In his conclusion Dr. Channing reminds us that, "The great question, how your children may prosper most in life should be secondary. Give them force of character and you give them more than fortune. Give them pure and lofty principles and you give them more than thrones. Instill Christian benevolence and the love of God, and you enrich them more than by laying worlds at their feet. Our Sunday Schools are meant to aid you in the great work of forming your children to true excellence."

At least some of the teachers whom Channing reached must have passed on this inspired spiritual vision, for the essence of it is evident in the lives of many of their pupils and their descendants. Today's techniques and additional insights give even more scope and exciting potentialities to implementing these principles. Whenever the souls of our teachers are aflame with goals of such strong conviction we may be assured that the "soul of the pupil will be awakened, his understanding conscience and heart will be brought into earnest, vigorous action on religious and moral truth, and spiritual life will be excited and cherished in him."

Ad Universos, Clericos, Academicos, et al

Alexander St.-Ivanyi

In its long and tortuous struggle upwards, Western Civilization had to teach itself to accept religious tolerance as an integral part of the fabric of freedom.

Four hundred years ago, in 1557, the Diet of Torda in Transylvania, Hungary, became the first European legislative body to pass an Act granting religious tolerance to its citizens. "Each person" said the Act, "may hold whatever religious faith he wishes, with old or new rituals, while we at the same time leave it to their judgment to do as they please in the matter of their faith, just so long, however, as they bring no harm to bear on anyone at all, lest the followers of a new religion be a source of irritation to the old profession of faith or become in some way injurious to its followers . . . "

A modest statement perhaps by today's standards—but in those days this modest statement represented a revolution in men's thinking. It must be remembered that at the time this was enacted, religious intolerance was rife in most European countries, and that the concepts of human dignity and personal freedom which are supported by the Bible were frequently honored in their abuse.

It must also be remembered that at the time these simple words were written into law, the world was sharply divided between the Mohammedan East and the Christian West and that Hungary was the battleground between the two. The Act is all the more significant for our own times in view of the fact that it became law through the co-operation of the Protestant dominated Diet and a Roman Catholic queen.

The Act became the foundation for the more comprehensive "Act of Religious Liberty and Freedom of Conscience," which was evolved by subsequent sessions of the Diet between 1557 and 1571, and which remained the basic law of the Constitution of Hungary until the Communists took over the country in the recent post-war period.

In the four centuries that have intervened, it has become universally recognized that freedom and religious tolerance are inseparable. It is not surprising therefore that whenever the Hungarian people have been confronted with the necessity of fighting for their political or economic freedom, one of their first actions has been to reassert the "Act of Religious Liberty and Freedom of Conscience" passed by the Diet of Torda. The national insurrection in October of last year and the Writers Revolt which preceded it, both declared that religious liberty and freedom of conscience were the sine qua non of all other freedom and liberty.

Because it believes that the first European legislation granting religious tolerance is of great interest, the Hungarian Inter-faith Brotherhood hopes that the four-hundredth anniversary which is scheduled for June 9, 1957, and October 27, 1957, will be widely observed in this country and in other countries. We shall be happy to offer our co-operation to all groups who wish to participate in the observance. We shall, for example, be happy to send you our folder containing a short summary of the historical details, the full texts of the Diet resolutions and royal decrees, as well as the source material and essential bibliographical notes. In return, we should be grateful for any contribution to assist us in the work of disseminating information and encouraging the observance of the four-hundredth anniversary.

In 1557 when the Act of Toleration became law, Francis David was Bishop of the Hungarian Lutherans. During the period (1557-1571) while the Act of Religious Liberty and Freedom of Conscience was developed out of the Toleration Act, he was Bishop first of the Reformed Church, then of the Unitarian Church. As such he was one of the two Bishops of the realm in 1557, one of the three later on. His influence was decisive in the constant broadening of religious freedom.

As to John Sigismund, the only Unitarian King of history, he was a minor in 1557 but he was the legitimate King of Hungary, and Queen Isabella, his mother, exercised royal power only in his name. When he came of age, two years later, John Sigismund continued to develop the Toleration Act of 1557 and he kept on inspiring the Diet to make it more and more comprehensive as long as he lived. The last legislation for religious freedom took place in the last weeks of his reign. After his death, his successors tried to curtail rather than further religious freedom, even though the Acts passed under John Sigismund's reign were never revoked.

The Use of the Bible in Church School

The Rev. John M. Kolbjornsen, Sharon, Mass.

An argument sometimes advanced for teaching biblical material in liberal religious church schools is that we cannot afford to ignore it for fear that, if we do not present our liberal interpretation to the children first, they will pick up the illiberal, literal interpretations all too prevalent in our predominantly orthodox Christian religious culture.

The Beacon Series in Religious Education accordingly offers a liberal Joseph, a liberal Moses, a liberal Jesus, and a liberal "Drama of Ancient Israel." Other Bible-centered books in the Series include "Men of Prophetic Fire" and the recent "Old Story of Salvation."

Some parents insist that their children be taught Bible stories even in their earlier church school years, and the Beacon Series Curriculum Committee is to be congratulated on providing material that can satisfy this demand without getting bogged down in Biblical literalism. The Bible-centered books mentioned above in general do give a liberal interpretation of their subject matter.

But we must ask ourselves, it seems to me, if the subject matter is worth bothering with at all in the early church school years. I do not believe it is except in the case of Jesus. The argument that we cannot afford to ignore the Bible on pain of having our children pick up orthodox ideas is admittedly valid with respect to Jesus. The orthodox concept of him looms so large in our culture that our children are bound to be influenced unless we take some remedial measures.

The remedial measures represented by "Jesus the Carpenter's Son," however, is open to serious question, I believe. The book is highly conjectural from an historical point of view and is very sentimental in its concept of Jesus. It is also intended, according to the Beacon Series booklet, for eleven-and-twelve-year-olds, which is too late. A new and different liberal approach, intended for the eight- and nine-year-old level, is needed in presenting Jesus to our children, and it is to be hoped that the Curriculum Committee of the Beacon Series will soon tackle this task.

In the case of Joseph and Moses and other Old Testament figures, the danger of our younger children's concept of them being undermined by our general orthodox culture is not nearly so great as in the case of Jesus for the simple reason that they play a much lesser role in our culture. Younger children are hardly likely to argue about Joseph or Moses or Saul or David, as they might about the person of Jesus. We can safely afford to ignore the Old Testament figures during the earlier church school grades.

Rather than spend time on biblical material which can have little experimental value in the lives of younger church school children it would be better to omit this material (excepting Jesus) and concentrate during these early years on the non-biblical Beacon Series books intended for the younger age-levels. The subject matter of these books is generally germane to the children's everyday experiences and feelings. Let us first help them to marvel at the wonders of everyday life before we try to fill them with biblical history!

If an individual child is disturbed by a biblical tale he may hear, let us say, from a Baptist playmate, the matter can be dealt with individually by the teacher, or perhaps one or two lessons devoted to the particular subject, but not a whole church school year.

The middle years of church school, say grades Four, Five and Six, can very profitably be spent preparing the children for a later study of the Bible. This would have merit in itself, apart from simply preparing them for later Bible study.

Courses for this age-level that can be made both interesting and edifying, as well as good preparation for the Bible, would be on the subject of how religion began and how it developed in various pre-biblical cultures, starting with primitive man's reactions to the forces of nature and ending with the religions from which the ancient Hebrews derived some of their ideas. The book on Ahknatan would, of course, fit in the latter category.

After this background has been presented the start of the study of the Bible will be much more meaningful for the children. By this time, when they are twelve or thirteen, they should have learned to be more discriminating and less literal-minded and the Bible can be presented on a more advanced level, with less editing than is necessary when the Bible is presented at a younger age-level.

We owe our children knowledge of the Bible as part of our religious and cultural heritage, but unless we prepare them to interpret it liberally we will only confuse them and waste both their time and the time of our teachers. If we will take time to lay the foundations, a liberal attitude toward the Bible—critical but still appreciative—can be instilled in our children.

THE RELIGION OF TOMORROW

Alan G. Deale

Anything that we can say about the religion of tomorrow will of necessity fall into one of two categories of thought. The two categories which naturally come to mind are those of belief and knowledge. We can honestly have very little knowledge about affairs in any realm of the future. We have knowledge to a degree about today and yesterday because of evidence. There is little evidence about tomorrow so that our thoughts fall into the general area of belief. As long as we understand this we may speak. If we do not accept this we might do well to keep silent.

There is a well known maxim to the effect that "what we are to be we are now becoming." In this spirit a word must be said about today and the religion of today before we say much about tomorrow.

A recent issue of the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* reports the result of a Gallup religious poll in an excellent editorial. The figures and conclusions are an illuminating footnote on religion in Britain today. Of the people over age twenty who responded, 71% believe in Christ as the son of God. 14% of the respondents were regular attendants at church. Those who believed in God totaled 78%. The most jarring figure was the 53% who responded that they thought the church should keep out of politics.

The writer of the editorial sees tragic public apathy in these figures. The high per cent of those wishing to keep the church out of political issues is seen as a total failure of commitment and the fact that most of the respondents consider religion is "a matter apart."

In America, the editors of *Life* published an issue sometime ago devoted to Christianity. This issue was reviewed in that excellent magazine, the *Reporter*. Commenting that the *Life* issue presented American Christianity as something big and booming, the *Reporter* asked, ". . . is that the basis of a man's faith, that this is something big and booming? Nothing about truth or sin, or inner satisfaction of the soul?" The writer of the review in the *Reporter* gets close to the bone when he says of the *Life* spread; "As we read . . . those endless evangelical pages of *Life* on American Christianity, we begin to yearn for something Christian, and something American, that is missing. The Christian note that's not really there is contrition; some sense of a distance between our national ethos, our 'evolution,' our 'collaborating with God,' and an ever-questioning faith. The American note that's missing is a bit of frontier skepticism and humor."

The current rejuvenation of interest in religion has been called a Christian-American pagan Renaissance. Pagan in that God as a spiritual factor is not necessarily at the center of the whole picture but at the source of "things." Many observers point up the materialistic factors which figure in religion today. Too many Americans have found it convenient to be considered religious because it is now—so to speak—the done thing. God is too often equated with the one who has made possible the suburban home, the second car and membership in the country club.

It might be a very healthy thing to have a wave of atheistic iconoclasm sweep the country to see how loyal we Americans are to the religious beliefs we profess today. There must be thinkers about who can ask embarrassing questions of conventional Christianity. Except for men like Prof. Charles Frankel (The Case for Modern Man) these people seem temporarily silenced. We could use another Mencken. Christianity has been so equated with capitalist economies and the politics of the west that anyone who questions the creeds and beliefs of Christian history today is apt to be thought of in the minds of the many to be a potential bomb thrower wishing to start a revolution and overthrow the government by force.

Therefore I would say that since the church seems to be in a secure spot today and many people have shown an interest in its message, a word of warning might be in order for the future.

Fifty years ago to many of America's most astute thinkers the future of religion was thought to hold promise for the liberal alone. This has not been the case. A familiar name in this part of the world is that of Charles William Eliot, probably the most distinguished president Harvard ever had. Eliot was such a figure in the American scene as to command world wide respect. When President Theodore Roosevelt was in Cambridge visiting Dr. Eliot it was said that "Mr. Roosevelt is in Cambridge visiting the President."

President Eliot was deeply concerned with education. No less was his interest in religion. In 1909, he delivered a now famous address on the subject of the "Religion of the Future." Knowing what we do now, his words sound rather strange to us. But for the fact that Eliot was a Unitarian we perhaps would have found his remarks a shock. His address is the testimony of a great humanitarian with ideals and faith in democracy and the human venture.

Eliot saw very little future for religions based on authority and supernaturalism. He saw a future of progress in all fields and an increase in the practical teachings of Christianity especially brotherhood. He saw religion as largely equated with the quest for social justice and the nobility of man and the love of God. Today we know that religions of authority have not lost numbers, they have gained. We know that progress has not been consistent or guaranteed. We know that brotherhood is a long way off. We know that credal religion and theological complexity are both much in vogue in the religious scene. History has made some sickening moves since President Eliot wrote. Thus we have tried to be more realistic for our times as Eliot was for his.

One of the main reasons for the vogue of the new intellectual Christianity and its attraction for many could well be that it is realistic. It is not merely concerned with another world. It is not merely teaching pie in the sky. A concept of man as sinner is not nearly as naïve as some of us have thought. This concept sees man as both child of God and as sinner.

President Eliot was not wrong. Ideals are never mistaken, they are only misplaced. The great educator had a larger faith in man and his potentialities than man has been able to demonstrate being worthy.

Thus it is sad to say and yet safe to speculate that religion in the future will not be too different from that which we know today. Those churches which believe that they have a faith that was once revealed and never to be changed will not change greatly. They will still be telling us that we must accept something because the ancient scriptures speak of it. There are others however who will change. We can predict this with conviction because we have been able to see some change in the history of churches and their faiths.

People in the future will still have the same drives and essential natures that they now possess. Religion will therefore follow similar patterns. There will arise new cults and new forms of religion and some of those we know now will wither, decline and disappear. It will be true then as it is now that religion as we know it in organized forms will not satisfy all people. There will still be many who feel no need of a church organization. Those who are spoken of as the unchurched. It is one of the great tasks of the liberal church to approach these people. Many of them are thinkers whose needs are not fulfilled in the churches of tradition. These people are not insensitive to the truths which liberal religion affirms. They are not out of step with spiritual values. They are definitely interested in the "great things." They may have their needs met by communication with great literature and the world of art. They may prefer to spend Sunday morning with the wisdom of the *New York Times* rather than listen to the opinions of a preacher. Their "moments" of worship and spiritual oneness may be partially through the media of music or simply in the mysteries of nature. We need these people to broaden our vision and to strenghten our numbers. They need us to share with them the experience of corporate worship. All religion and the Unitarian religion included will have to broaden its scope if it is to grow as we would wish. We feel that we have an edge in the race. Merely because we have been trying for some time to widen our scope and enlarge our vision.

We have tried to see religion as something greater than the confines set by orthodox Christianity. We see some form of the religious urge in all peoples and in all cultures and we wish to promote it. We are convinced that truth is not restricted to one race or particular creed. We believe that it is universal. Thus we feel that honest religion has nothing to fear from science or any academic discipline in the expanding field of knowledge if it is the truth. The essence of real religion is truth itself. Would that the future held hope for more real religion.

The big difference which we might expect to see in the religion of the future is in the area of form. The form of worship as a technique and church architecture itself will change. Already there are churches which are experimenting with different worship forms. Church architecture has already set the stage for tomorrow. The stress will of necessity be functional because of today's high costs. The new churches will stress function matched with simple beauty.

Yet in the future Unitarians will still be stressing the values of religion rather than its particular forms. They will stress those values which are eternal. We will then as now worship God as the fountainhead of love and meaning in the universe. A God who needs men to carry out the task. We revere the person of Jesus. We will do so in the future. We will see him even then as one who tried to bring men closer to God, and on better terms with their fellows. We look at the record of Jesus and are shocked as we are by all the prophets who have had the courage to speak against the evil of men. We are shocked out of our easy complacence and self-centeredness. We are made to feel small in the presence of greatness, as we are made uneasy by those who have spokesmen for mankind. We will still experience similar feelings in the religion of the future.

Waldemar Argow in his excellent little book *What Do Religious Liberals Believe?* has said (page 91-92), "What is needed today is a bold

new concept of the purpose and function of the church. The church must save men, yes, but not from hellfire and damnation. It must save them from the consequences of their own folly and the fruits of their own ignorance, prejudice and superstition . . . Desperately we need to be educated to the hazardous business of living in an atomic age. Many of our problems still spring from widespread ignorance. Race, as it is popularly understood is a myth. Nationalism is not the glory of Fourth of July oratory, but a cancer eating away at world security. Democracy is no American invention or monopoly, but a food —strangely flavored sometimes, to be sure—for which millions hunger across the earth. World government is neither an impossible ideal, nor is it without precedent. Man is a creature of incredible resource, capable of solving even the modern dilemma, once he is challenged and motivated sufficiently."

Tomorrow's church will have to face these problems more realistically than has the church of history. They will not be solved soon—it will take time and faith. The religion of tomorrow has its work cut out for it. It will require the work of many skilled hands acting upon orders from intelligent tolerant minds.

Unitarianism is at best a religion of great faith. As Unitarians we have a reasoned faith that what we do today is worth doing. Not only will it count today but will meet the needs of the man of tomorrow.

As we contemplate the future of religion we might listen carefully to Alfred North Whitehead when he says, "I hazard the prophecy that that religion will conquer which can render clear to popular understanding some eternal greatness in the passage of temporal fact."

THE OLD STORY OF SALVATION

by Mrs. S. L. Fahs

Reviewed by Charles C. Forman

Mrs. Fahs has written another book to add to the growing list of titles in the Beacon curriculum for Unitarian church schools. The present book is of special interest to readers of the UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN since it is written for use in high school and adult classes and study groups. The volume is divided into two main divisions: "The Old Story of Salvation" and "The Unanswered Question: What Is Truth?"

Mrs. Fahs undertakes in the first part of her book to set forth the scheme of salvation as read in the Bible by orthodox Protestants. Although the author suggests that the plan of salvation as outlined in the present book is accepted by Catholics as well as Protestants this is hardly true since the role of the Church, the authority of the Church councils, and the sacramental system as outlined in Catholic theology are passed over. Yet for a Catholic these are indispensable elements in the plan of salvation. This is no criticism since the author assumed an ambitious enough task in attempting to put before Unitarians the traditional Protestant position—and this in scarcely more than one hundred pages!

One might raise the question as to the legitimacy of adopting St. Augustine's division of time into seven ages and, thereby, implying that this rather arbitrary schematic arrangement is familiar to orthodox Protestants generally. This is, of course, not the case, and the sevenfold division has no real part in the plan of salvation. The present reviewer felt the same criticism needed to be made of the use of the Seven Ages in Manwell and Fahs, *The Church Across the Street* (Boston, Beacon Press), thus producing a misleading distortion of the orthodox position.

A few corrections in matters of detail in *part one* may here be in order. The tower of Babel (p. 18) is said to mean the "tower of Confusion," but the Hebrew word *babel* actually means "gate of God." Abraham is called a Hebrew (p. 19) but, more accurately, he should be called the father of the Hebrews since he is also regarded as the father of the Arabs in the Koran. The Hebrews as a nation do not emerge in history until after Abraham. In dealing with the Esau-Jacob episode (cf. p.28f.) one misses any mention of the fact that Isaac did bless Jacob so that the leadership of the family passes from Isaac to Jacob even if he had never made a bargain with his twin.

There is, on page 36, a curious claim that Moses is a savior child. Attributing to Moses the function of a savior seems to be a deliberate but strained attempt to provide an early parallel to Christ, while failing to do justice to the facts of the orthodox position. Moses has no soteriological function; the "savior concept" as it appears in Christian theology is Greek and quite foreign to Hebrew thought. It is interesting to note that when the author describes the visitation of the angel of death to every Egyptian household on

the night of the exodus not even a dog growled in Goshen (cf. p.43), a detail that quite escaped the biblical narrator! On page 60 two comments need to be made: Samuel doubtlessly performed certain priestly functions and is associated with the shrine at Shiloh, but tradition has numbered him among the prophets of Israel and so he is said to be in I Samuel 3: 20; the Philistines were not Canaanites but, rather, Mediterranean people (probably from Crete) who were pushing to the south and east in the thirteenth and twelfth centuries B.C. Unlike the Canaanites, who were Semites, the Philistines were Indo-Europeans.

On page 92 it is stated that Jesus was tried before "priestly judges." It would have been better to call the court by its correct name; i.e., the Sanhedrin, composed of both the Sadducees, who were traditionally associated with the priestly families of Judea and the Pharisees. The statement that Saul led in the stoning of Stephen (cf. p.104) is not true to the biblical record which accords to him a position of guilt by association. Saul held the coats of those who participated in the stoning. One final correction must be permitted. On page 189 we are told that the Apocrypha is no longer included in the Christian Bible. The Apocrypha is, of course, a part of the Catholic Bible and constitutes one of the major differences between the canons of Protestant and Catholic scriptures.

In general Mrs. Fahs is to be congratulated on providing us with a clear and factual account of the story of salvation as it is accepted by the majority of Protestant Christians. We are indeed so much in her debt that it may seem ungracious to have taken issue with some of the details as she has sketched them.

When we come to the second part of her book we must raise questions of another kind, for here she is interpreting and discussing the salvation story. Liberal Christians have an even greater responsibility to be true to the facts when we deal with the interpretation and implication of this story for orthodox Christians. However, some of the details must first be examined. When on page 135 the question is asked: "Why is God always punishing people in the Story of Salvation?" the only possible answer is that he isn't. Furthermore, the role of lawgiver and judge in the Old Testament, and in the Near East generally, is regarded as kindly rather than punitive, a distinction we need to keep in mind when dealing with Old Testament material.

When we are told (cf. p. 138) that Unitarian leaders were holding on to the doctrine of hell after the Universalists had rejected the idea of eternal punishment we must hasten to add that Channing devoted a good deal of thought and attention to the subject of divine benevolence. Many of the early Unitarians were followers of Charles Chauncy, an avowed Arminian, in denying the doctrine of eternal punishment. We do no service to either Unitarian or Universalist history by obscuring their respective contributions and the relative positions of each. It is fair to say that, while the early Universalists placed great emphasis upon the salvation of all souls and were thus liberal at one point, the Unitarians were a liberal leaven affecting the whole body of Christian orthodoxy. In connection with Mrs. Fahs' discussion of the doctrine of hell one could wish that she had given us a paragraph on purgatory in connection with Roman Catholic theology. I see nothing in the Story of Salvation to bear out the judgment that one part of humanity is "destined to live forever in bliss, the other part destined to a living death in isolated misery," as Mrs. Fahs suggests on page 160. Presumably heaven might be empty and hell overflowing, just as the opposite might also be true, according to the choice freely left to mankind!

The New Testament was written in Greek because it was the product of Gentile Christianity, not because the Greek language was the popular language of the Middle East (cf. p. 148). It might be pointed out that the question of apostolic authorship for the gospels is not as conclusively settled as Mrs. Fahs suggests (p. 153). So eminent a New Testament scholar as Edgar J. Goodspeed in his most recent book on the Twelve Disciples gives strong arguments for the traditional view that Matthew wrote the gospel bearing his name. On page 161 we should read *Mt. Fuji* or *Fujiyama,* the suffix "yama" being "mountain" in Japanese.

The "kingdom of God" was probably not a common slogan (as Mrs. Fahs thinks on p. 149) when Jesus began his ministry. The Old Testament, to be sure, speaks of Israel as a holy nation and the theocratic concept and ideal was strong in Israel at various times in her history but, strictly speaking, the "kingdom of God" belongs to the thought of the New Testament rather than the Old. That it was a comparatively new idea is illustrated by the fact that the disciples of Jesus failed to grasp its meaning until the very end of his life. And did Peter actually preach "the gospel of a risen Saviour," as we are told (cf. p. 153)? The present reviewer thinks it is extremely unlikely that the leader of the Jewish-Christian party would take as a central tenet of his preaching over a period of thirty or forty years the Greek notion of a savior! Conversely, resurrection was a thoroughly Jewish concept.

It is heartening to see the sensitive manner with which Mrs. Fahs approaches the death of Jesus and the significance of the cross in orthodox thought. We need to cultivate the broad and sympathetic spirit here demonstrated and generally evident throughout the book. The author's liberal presuppositions are showing, however, when she says that "the truly religious person is seldom

dogmatic" (cf. p. 166). The affliction of dogmatism seems to beset both the religious and the irreligious, quite independent of the degree of piety that may have been attained!

On page 167 Mrs. Fahs raises the question of whether we should stop thinking about God and goes on to suggest that the issue really resolves itself around the matter of good and bad thinking, advocating that "the heart and mind be wedded in harmony"—a note all too seldom sounded in recent Unitarian writing. For those who choose to deny the reality of God there is this warning:

> "If we stop thinking, we simply go on living with the last thought we had. Unfortunately this is just what many do. They live with outworn religious ideas, while at the same time they speed ambitiously to grasp the latest ideas in every other realm of life."

For those whose last thought was a negation this diagnosis is strongly recommended!

Significant questions are raised in the closing pages of the book, questions that each reader must answer for himself in regard to what we shall do with the story of salvation. Many Unitarians will hasten to agree with Mrs. Fahs when she says (p. 186f.) that "Our generation needs to investigate and to live with the scientists' imaginative pictures of the universe and of mankind's ages of evolution . . . a greater story of salvation is in the making." Many of us are not prepared, however, to reject the method of interpretation which the author identifies as "idealism," nor can we afford to overlook the modern understanding and use of mythology and legend in the search for truth beyond and behind historical records. In short, there are for many of us real values in the old story of salvation. We will not be satisfied with the position of orthodoxy with its low doctrine of man but we will insist as liberal Christianity has always insisted that there is a valid interpretation of this story that makes a doctrine of salvation legitimate. Many of us will argue that man needs to be saved *from* the destructive elements within his nature and his environment alike. He needs also to be saved *to* the moral potential within his grasp. Do we not impoverish our liberal Christianity when we fail to see in Jesus of Nazareth a moral example that works for our salvation?

We salute the inclusion of Mrs. Fahs' book in the curriculum materials designed for our Unitarian church schools. Would there not be a place in the curriculum for another volume which might supplement the *Old Story of Salvation* and deal with the values and insights inherent in the salvation story?

THE ESSENES AND CHRISTIANITY

by Duncan Howlett

Reviewed by Henry Hallam Saunderson

Many people are watching eagerly for all the knowledge that can be gained concerning those strange documents discovered a few years ago near the Dead Sea. The story of the first discovery of the scrolls has been widely told. Their meaning is a very complicated problem—or rather group of interrelated problems. How is progress being made?

In the first place, new scrolls are being discovered. Caves are being explored with surprising results. Besides scrolls nearly complete, tens of thousands of fragments are being recovered from the rubbish on the floors of caves. Then this vast amount of material is being arranged and deciphered. Translations are being made, and widely distributed. And scholars are studying intensely the results, and are approaching agreement on many phases of this study.

There are areas in this study to which, a few years ago, the word "mysterious" was applied but to which, progressively, scholars have applied "possible," then "probable," and then "practically assured." In presenting the results of their studies, these scholars are reaching a very wide public. There are literally millions of readers who want to know what all this means. They are grateful for these interpretations.

This brings us to a piece of news that is very gratifying. One of the highly skilled interpreters in this field of the scrolls is Duncan Howlett, the Minister of our First Church in Boston. He has written a book entitled *The Essenes and Christianity*, and it is published by Harpers. It is a very valuable addition to the literature concerning the scrolls. The sub-title is *An Interpretation of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. With gratifying clarity the author puts before us the well-nigh assured results of the study of many phases of this complicated discovery. Many readers will walk with confident steps a way on which heretofore they have groped. We are grateful to the author for his careful scholarship which he is able to make intensely interesting.

We are receiving a flood of light on the condi-

tions of life in Palestine when Jesus lived; and this is multiplying many times over the significance of much that the Master taught. We are gaining greatly in our knowledge of how the Christian movement started, and along what lines it developed in its earliest years. We are learning much about the Judaism of those times, and in what ways Judaism was the background of the vital Christian movement.

In the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era, and during the first Christian century, there were sharp divisions in Judaism, and parties not only debated their differences but fought over them. And the religious parties were entangled with political parties. There was vast confusion in Palestine and in other countries to which Jews had migrated.

In this new book, Duncan Howlett has done a very skillful piece of work in clarifying this tangle. He shows why there was a party in Judaism to which the name *Essenes* has been given. These people believed that there was widespread apostacy in Judaism; and they desired to restore, as fully as possible, obedience to the ancient covenant between Israel and their God. We have evidence that a census of the population of Palestine, in the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era, would show at least four thousand Essenes.

A group of these people established a Community House near the Dead Sea. The ruins of that house have been excavated in the past five years. It was a very extensive institution, having twenty or more rooms. Probably the building was begun in the second century B.C. It was destroyed in 68 A.D. Within the building a fraternal life was carried on. We are learning much about the manner of life within those walls, and the devoted purpose that kept men there for several generations.

The leaders of the dominant elements of Judaism insisted on the perpetuation of the ancient system of burnt offerings on the altar of the great temple in Jerusalem. In sharp contrast, the Essenes rejected that sacrificial system. They were endeavoring to build religion on a higher intellectual, spiritual, and moral level. They carried on, in that Community House, in the wilderness, a tremendous work in the making of manuscripts. Probably two hundred men were housed there. From the scroll called *The Manual of Discipline,* found intact, we learn the strict discipline of their life.

In their rejection of the sacrificial system and the elaborate ritual of the Jerusalem Temple, these Essenes were followers of the teachings of the Prophets of Israel. They have been called "a prophetic party in Judaism." They made copies of the books of the Hebrew Bible, our Old Testament. But they made many other manuscripts. Among the Dead Sea Scrolls are found, in whole or in fragments, at least five hundred different manuscripts. Besides the copies of Biblical works are thus a great many compositions original with them.

From tools found in the ruins of the House we learn much about physical labors performed by these men. But what else did they do to provide the necessities of life? Did they send out scrolls to the other Essenes in Palestine? Were they, by this activity, doing a great educational work in Judaism? Was this educational work the major purpose of their life in maintaining their Community House? In these ruins is found a large room, unquestionably a scriptorium. Here this great work of writing was done.

A few years before 70 A.D. the Romans, who were overlords of the Jews, lost all patience with these conquered people, and devastated Palestine. Seeing the approach of the Roman legions, the men of the Community House hid their precious manuscripts in caves near at hand. And now, after nearly ninety centuries, this incomparable find has been made; and we get a great light on the country where, and the times when, the Man of Nazareth lived, taught and died. He was, indeed, "the last and the greatest of the Prophets of Israel." He offered to mankind a world-religion.

THE ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Unitarian Christian Fellowship was held Monday evening, April 29, in Arlington Street Church.

The following officers were elected for the ensuing year:

President ..... Rev. Paul H. Chapman
First Vice-President ..... Mr. Marshall I. Stone
Second Vice-President ..... Mrs. Herbert Lyman
Corresponding Secretary ..... Mr. Ralph Lazzaro
Recording Secretary ..... Rev. Charles C. Forman
Treasurer ..... Mr. Constant Wendell
Directors for three years ... Miss Frances Porter
Rev. Henry Hallam Saunderson

After the business session the company moved into the Chapel and a brief service of consecration was held. Rev. Alan G. Deale, of Fairhaven, Mass., preached on the topic "The Religion of Tomorrow." The sermon is printed in full in this number of THE UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN.

PRAYER

God, our Father, to whom we turn in times of inward turmoil and spiritual perplexity: as the days of our years go by, as we see and experience the various vicissitudes of our existence, we often find that the ways of this world and the mysteries of this life are completely beyond our understanding. We cannot comprehend the why and wherefore of that which comes to pass.

We see good people who are made to suffer. Innocence and purity are punished. Lives in the full bloom of youth are snuffed out by a capricious twist of a senseless fate. We peer into the great void of the unknown but see only darkness. We strain to hear sounds of harmony, but falling on our ears is only the echo of our own voices asking, "Why do these things happen?"

Gracious and loving Father: tell us again that this is not Thy doing. Whatever be the malign and terrible power that authors tragedy, it is not Thy hand. Trial and tribulation are from some force that is enemy to us and to Thee. For from the fount of Thy being flows only good.

Assure us again that eternity shall make amends for the wrongs that time metes out to us. In the great beyond we shall surely gain all that we lose here. An everlasting tomorrow will heal the wounds of today.

Make us to know that out of misadventures that seem to have no rhyme or reason, a design of meaning and purpose shall emerge. Somehow Thine infinite love and wisdom will bring good out of evil.

As we yearn for some word of comfort and assurance, tell us again and again, in every revelation that comes to us, that in Thee there is light for our darkness and balm for our spirits. So make our minds serene and our hearts untroubled. *Amen.*

NOTICE

On Sunday evening, May 26, the Unitarian Christian Fellowship will hold a supper meeting in the Parish rooms of the Old South Church, Copley Square. After the supper, Dr. James Luther Adams will give an address: "The Frontiers of Liberal Religion: Vanishing and Emerging."

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Rev. John M. Kolbjornsen is minister of the First Congregational Parish, Sharon, Mass.

Rev. Paul H. Chapman is minister of the Third Congregational Society, Greenfield, Mass.

Dr. Alexander St.-Ivanyi is minister of the First Church of Christ, Lancaster, Mass., and of the First Unitarian Church, Clinton, Mass.

Rev. Alan G. Deale is minister of the Unitarian Society of Fairhaven, Mass.

Editorial

(Continued from page 2)

their little ships about and fled back to England in a kind of terror? They could not know: therefore they kept on with their daily laboring, suffering, trusting, and praying—and here is the result, America.

But at this point a little impulse of something like indignation begins to grumble in our hearts. It was all well enough for them to start the ball rolling. Anyone could have done it, for once started the ball rolled and swelled virtually of its own accord. And now that it has rolled itself up to Modern America the real task begins to emerge. It is the task of maintenance; and there is nothing automatic about it whatever. It demands an acute consciousness of America's needs and dangers, her insidious tendencies and furtive temptations disguised as opportunities. The task demands a pretty thorough knowledge of America as a whole; and an equally thorough knowledge of ourselves upon whose shoulders rests the responsibility for America's wise and adequate maintenance.

We did not ask for that responsibility. What justice is there in forcing it upon us? All we want is a snug little orderly, manageable life of our own; the privilege of absorbing ourselves in our own personal projects and ambitions; and concerning ourselves with our own family fortunes and prosperity. Granted that we could undertake this task of maintenance if we wanted to, why should we want to? Why should we burden ourselves with the vast bewildering mass of information, or with the political wisdom, the magnanimities, the foresight, the self-consecration which the task requires. Let Sam Adams, and James Otis, and Patrick Henry, and George Washington, and Thomas Paine, and Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin come back to earth and finish what they began. What justice is there in shifting their burden on to our shoulders? We aspire to no such greatness. Life is too short. This mood of indignation is perfectly natural; it is also perfectly foolish. We had better take another look at the *Susan Constant* moored at Hain's Point, or at *Mayflower II* at her berth off Plymouth Rock, and the first thought that ought to come to us is: "Dear Lord, help me. I've got to be a new man—all the man I can be: well-informed, far-sighted, magnanimous, clean-hearted, right-spirited, self-consecrated, an ideal American citizen." It is not exactly a comfortable ideal. Some of us will never even approach it. None of us will ever approach it unless we are willing. That is the first step: simply to want to be men and women of the moral and spiritual stature that our times demand.

C. E. P.